

# Solomon: Women's forum helpful

BY GORETHY KENNETH

THE 2015 Papua New Guinea Women's Forum has been of great help to the Government's preparation on its social laws and policies that are now under the radar.

And its recommendations would greatly help the Government through the Department of Religion, Youth and Community Development to implement laws and policies.

Department Secretary Anna Solomon yesterday recapped the hardship faced to organise forums that would gather all women from all over Papua New Guinea.

She said this week she was happy that women from all walks of life, both nationally and internationally, had come together to connect and that it was time to walk the talk.

"The Government is focused on three different areas, women, economic empowerment and gender based violence," Ms Solomon said.

"But for far too long we have focused on gender based violence and we would now like to focus on women economic empowerment, including all other important issues and I commend this initiative, especially women in business and I commend all these women who have made it out here in this very challenging environment," she said.

"I wanted to use this as an avenue to inform the women on my views on reforms that are taking place and we've strategically done that through the different presentations from government in a number of panels that are present here.

"And many of them now ap-

## At a glance

**WOMEN'S FORUM:** Secretary for Department of Community Development Anna Solomon has said the forum has been of great help to government in terms of preparing social laws and policies that are now under the radar.

**GOVT FOCUS:** Three different areas which are women, economic empowerment and gender based violence.

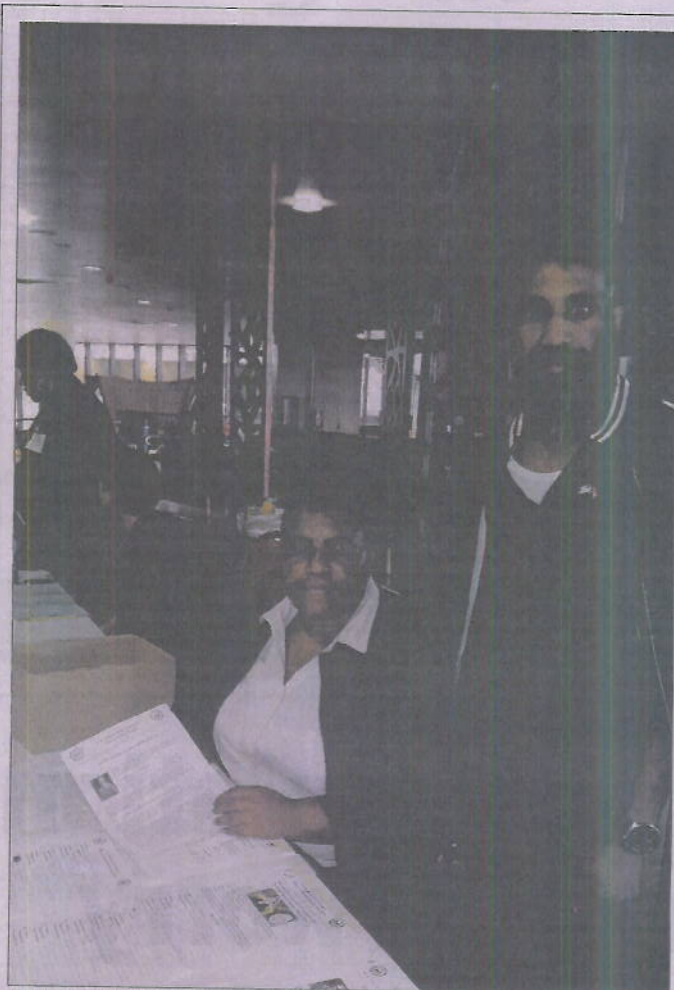
**SOLOMON:** I wanted to use this as an avenue to inform the women on my views on reforms that are taking place and we've strategically done that through the different presentations from government in a number of panels that are present here. I wanted to hear from the women themselves.

preciate what steps the government has taken to address these issues," she said.

"I wanted to hear from the women themselves, sometimes, same places, same faces, same women...and this is a very good forum where I am happy that we did not only invite business women or women leaders, we had representatives from universities, grassroots, business, inspiring women.

"...just bringing them here to tell their stories has inspired all of us.

"And for me while sitting and listening to them, it also helps me think whether we forgot anything. And I must say we are working on policies or before the law goes in, this forum allows for that and it's getting better and better," she said.



AMERICAN artist and curator Kendal Henry specialises in public art.

## US artist to speak at workshop

THE United States Embassy has brought into Papua New Guinea one of their top artist and curators to be guest speaker in an Art for Action Leadership Workshop that will be staged in Port Moresby today.

This is straight after the end of the 2015 PNG Women's Forum which was co-hosted by the US Embassy and National Government through the Department of Community Development.

American artist and curator Kendal Henry was

brought here for the duration of the 2015 PNG Women's Forum but to speak as a guest speaker on the Art for Action Leadership Workshop, which is a partnership with the University of PNG (UPNG).

Kendal will discuss in this workshop how to use art as a vehicle to communicate with other people to build ideas and implement them through projects that ultimately change the physical and spiritual landscape as they increase creative,

public, civic and economic investment.

Kendal is an artist and public art and urban design consultant who lives in New York City and specialises in the field of public art for the past 20 years. He illustrates that public art can be used as a tool for social engagement and economic development through projects and programs as evident in his work in the US, Europe, Russia, Asia, Central Asia, Australia and the Caribbean.

## Sexual violence stats alarming

BY NELLIE SETEPANO

ALARMING statistics of sexual violence cases have been reported by provincial authorities in Western Highlands during the past three years.

More children had been reportedly abused than adults, statistics showed, adding there could be more but stigma and discrimination had prevented victims from reporting to authorities, a women's forum was told.

According to a clinical supervisor from Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority, in 2012 there were 301 reported case of sexual violence in the province, of which 222 were children and 88 adults. In 2013, 330 cases were reported, 220 of them were children and the rest were adults who reported to clinics.

Last year, the authority reported 145 children and 57 adult cases of sexual violence.

Sister Edith Namba, a clinical supervisor, was among discussion panellists on the topic "combating sexual violence against children", said yesterday that many cases did not get reported because of stigma and discrimination.

## Mini expo for women

BY GORETHY KENNETH

THERE will be a mini expo on March 24, where all women in business will come together to speak about how they can tap into business opportunities in the 2015 Pacific Games.

This meeting will set the precedence for women of PNG to also tap and prepare for their benefits in the 2018 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting which will comprise of leaders of powerful nations.

Founder of PNG Women in Business Janet Sape and Community Development Secretary Anna Solomon this week announced during the 2015 PNG Women's Forum that there would be a mini expo to have all women, both business and grassroots and their potential groups come together.

**The bottom line** Ethnicity and gender interact to create especially large pay gaps for the minority women.

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